A SERMON

Preached at

DEPTFORD

Before the

BRETHREN

OF

Trinity-House

Of *DEPTFORD-STROND*:

ON

Trinity Monday.

BEING

The Day of their Annual Election of a New Master and Wardens.

By *JOHN FINGLAS*, Prebendary of St. *Andrews Dublin.*

LONDON:
Printed in the Year 1695.

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By JOHN TILLOTSON, Prebendary of Canterbury, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

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BODLEIANA · BIBLIOTHECA

TO

Sir MATHEW ANDREWS, Kt.

MASTER

OF THE

Trinity-Houſe

Of *DEPTFORD-STROND.*

SIR,

WHEN, at more than the requeſt, of a Noble Member of Your Society, I ſubmitted to this piece of ſervice; I had almoſt capitulated, that that requeſt ſhould not extend beyond the Pulpit. And had not the comſciouſneſs of my own mean performance ſecur'd me (as I thought) from any danger of the Preſs; I had realy inſiſted more nicelly on that priviledge. But the contrary commands Sir of Your Honourable Fraternity ſo uſeful to the Nation; and to which, we are all (eſpecially in this juncture) ſo much beholding; brought with them a ſuperſedeas to my firſt thoughts: And the World now has it as You deſir'd,

that is, no otherwise than You your selves had, without any other Addition or Diminution, except a word or two upon one Head.

I have in it (as to what relates to the Text) confin'd my thoughts to the Word of God: Or rather drawn them from it, as the best Rule of our Actions: And I am perswaded if we would but consider what God expects of us in every Stage and Station of our Life, we would, without any Perswasions take great care to live as Reasonable Men, and Good Christians.

I am highly sensible of its defects, but I fear 'twould be to little purpose to offer at an Apology for them (tho considering my circumstances, I have much to say for my self) And since the importunity of that Board, where You so happily præside, would not admit of a denial; I willingly embrace the occasion to express the great sence I have of that extraordinary civility, wherewith You and They were pleas'd to treat me. As it could not be merited by me, so neither was it expected, and therefore lays me under the greater Obligation to own my self,

SIR,

Yours

and Their Most Obliged Humble Servant,

JOHN FINGLAS.

Isaiah 43. 2. First part.

When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee: And through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee.

THE words are Metaphorical, the Metaphor borrowed from Sailors, who are expos'd to many hazards and dangers in their passage through the Waters; and may be thus unfolded, as it usually has been by most of those who write upon the Text. The World, say they, we may conceive as a Sea full of Waters, the Church as a Ship sailing in the midst of that Sea, *Passing through these Waters*; Afflictions, and among them, Persecutions especially, as the Winds that ruffle and raise the Waves, which endanger the overwhelming of the Ship; but having God himself for her Pilot, she sails notwithstanding securely, and at last arrives safely at the Haven of Heaven; for he tells her, *When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee.*

The Words contain a sweet and gracious Promise; wherein the Lord particularly ingageth to be present with his own People the *Jews*, in the *Babylonish* Captivity, and more generally with the whole Church of Christ, as well as every Member thereof; assuring them of his Divine Assistance at all times, and especially in their passage through the Waters of Tribulation to the Heavenly *Jerusalem*. So that in the Text we have considerable these following particulars.

I. The Churches outward State and Condition, and that is dangerous, *When thou passest through the Waters, and through the Rivers.*

II. Her Safety and Preservation in that dangerous condition, *They shall not overflow thee.*

III. The effectual Cause and Ground of that Safety, to wit, God's gracious Presence, *I will be with thee.*

First, The Churches outward Condition *When thou passest through the Waters*, &c.

Many are the Resemblances to which the Inspired Penmen compare the Afflictions of the Church, but to none more frequently than this of Waters. *Save me O God,* saith Holy David, *for the Waters are come in even unto my soul. I stick fast in the deep mire where no ground is, I am come into deep Waters, so that the floods run over me.* And again, *Take me out of the mire that I sink not, and out of the deep waters. Let not the water-flood drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the Pit shut her mouth upon me.* And yet, tho' by water our life is so frequently endangered, it cannot notwithstanding, without it, be well preserved; Nothing can more dangerously or uncomfortably be wanting to the life of Man than Water; and no less necessary and useful are Afflictions to the life of a Christian; they rouze us from our security, wean us from the World, and drive us unto God; and if they do not by any Inherent vertue and power of their own contribute to make Men better, yet, they will not, at least, suffer them to be at ease in their Sins, and so disposes them towards Repentance: Like a blustring Storm, they keep Men awake, make them look to their tackling, Faith; to their Anchor,

Psal. 69 1, 2.

v. 15, 16.

Anchor, Hope; to their Compaſs, the Word of God; whereas Proſperity, like a flattering and deceitful Calm, makes Men forget both their danger, and deliverer; like a conſtant and ſtiff Gale, it carries them with too full Sail, to be checkt or controuled: So that if a Man could be ſo uncharitable as to wiſh an Enemy's ſoul loſt, this were the only way, let him live in the height of the Worlds Blandiſhments, for how can he love a ſecond Beauty who never ſaw but one, and ſtill remains enamoured with it? While *Naomy*'s Husband and Sons liv'd, we find no motion of her returning home to *Judah*, but no ſooner are her earthly ſtays removed, but preſently her thoughts are home-ward. A delicious life, while every thing is reſplendant and contentful about us, makes us apt to ſet up our reſt here, to fancy a kind of ſtedfaſtneſs in the things we enjoy, and never think of another State. *Becauſe they have no changes*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *therefore they fear not God*; and he himſelf ſeems to be overtaken with this, *I ſaid in my proſperity I ſhall never be moved.* And tells us, plainly, *Before he was afflicted he went aſtray; but now*, that is after he had been chaſtiz'd, *he had kept Gods Word.* And doubtleſs, Adverſity has whipt many a ſoul to Heaven, which otherwiſe Proſperity had in all likelyhood coach'd to Hell; witneſs the Prodigal in the Parable, who was poſting thither, till he was whipt home again, by thoſe pitileſs and hard-hearted *Nabals*, who refuſed to fill his Belly with the husks of the Swine. And we every day ſee, that untouch'd Fortunes, and touch'd Conſciences ſeldom dwell together, and that it's but too uſual for them that know no ſorrow, to know no God. And therefore God himſelf, concerning his own People the *Jews*, ſays thus, *I will go and return to my Place, till they acknowledg their offence, and ſeek my face, for in their Affliction they will ſeek me early.* And again, *I will melt*

Pſal. 55. 9.

Pſal. 30. 6.

Pſal. 119. 67.

Hoſ. 5. 15.

Jer. 9. -.

them and try them, for how ſhall I do for the Daughter of my People. q. d. I will not only Afflict my People, but I will leave them under the preſſure thereof, for I can deviſe no other way to do them good, than by caſting them into the furnace of affliction, having by long trial found that nothing elſe will work upon a ſinful and ſtiff-neck'd People, but then I am ſure they will earneſtly and inſtantly ſeek after me.

But not only Afflictions in general, but Perſecutions the moſt grievous of Afflictions, and thoſe the moſt violent and outragious, are in the Scripture repreſented by
Pſal. 88. 7. Waters, and ſo David complains, *Thine Indignation lieth hard on me, and thou haſt afflicted me with all thy Waves.*
Hoſ. 5. 10. And God himſelf tells the Princes of *Judah, That he will pour out his Wrath upon them like Water.* And the Church groaning under the fury and oppreſſion of her Enemies
Lam. 3. 54. cries out, *That the Waters flowed over her Head.* Of all Elements, Fire and Water are the moſt mercileſs, they are, we ſay, good Servants, but bad Maſters; and of the two, Water is the worſt: for there's no Fire ſo fierce or raging, but it may be quench'd with water, but if Water become violent, it cannot by any power of Man be reſiſted; none but God himſelf can ſet Doors
Job 38. 11, 12. and Bars to its Incroachments, and ſay, *Hitherto ſhalt thou paſs, and no further: and here ſhall thy proud waves*
Job. 10. 7. *be ſtayed.* Nor can any take off God's afflicting Hand but himſelf. *It's He that ſmites, and he muſt heal; He that wounds, and he muſt bind up;* and therefore the Pro-
Hoſ. 6. 1. phet's Inference ſhould be ours, *Come,* ſays he, *and let us return unto the Lord.* He is a ſilly Malefactor, that, in hopes of a Reprieve or Pardon, applies himſelf to the Executioner, and not to the Judge; yet 'tis too too often the very courſe we our ſelves take, who in the day of trouble reſt upon vain helps that cannot profit, ſometimes upon the arm of fleſh only, to which there's

a Curſe annext, *Curſed is the man that truſteth in man,* Jer. 17. 5. *and maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord.* Sometimes upon ſome Angel or Saint in Heaven, from whom ſome expect relief, or (which is much worſe) like *Saul*, from Conjurers or Witches upon Earth, reſolving with the Heathen,

Flectere ſi nequeo ſuperos, Acheronta movebo,

Which is in Plain Engliſh, if I cannot prevail with God, I will apply my ſelf to the Devil: As *Ahaziah*, 1 Kings who being ſick, ſent to enquire of *Baal-zebub* the God 1. 2. of *Eckron*, whether he ſhould recover of his ſickneſs; but woful is the Cure (as he too ſadly found) that is wrought by ſuch Phyſitians: we have learnt better things; the general rule in all trouble is, *Call upon me* Pſal. 58. 15 *in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee; and thou ſhalt glorifie me. As*, therefore, *the eyes of ſervants, look unto the* Pſal. 123. 2. *hands of their Maſters, and as the eyes of a Maiden to the hand of her Miſtreſs, ſo our eyes* ſhall, *wait upon thee our God, until thou have mercy upon us.*

But yet farther, We have here mention, not only of Waters, but of Rivers of Waters, which notes the variety and multiplicity of the Churches troubles. *Many*, ſaith Pſal. 34. 19. the Pſalmiſt, *are the Afflictions of the Righteous.* Many in number, heavy in burthen, and ſometimes long in continuance; which holds true, both as to the Church in general, and the Saints in particular. What doleful complaints doth the Church make every where in the Book of the *Lamentations? Behold, O Lord, how I am trou-* Lam. cha. *bled, my Bowels ſwell, my heart is turned within me,* 1. 2. *I am full of heavineſs, for the Sword ſpoileth abroad, as Death doth at home:* And how lamentably doth the People of God bemoan themſelves, and the State of the Church in *Eſay*'s Propheſie? *Be not angry, O Lord, above* Iſa. 46. 9, *meaſure, neither remember Iniquity for ever: Behold, ſee we* 10, 11. *beſeech thee, we are thy People. Thy holy Cities are a Wil-*

derneſs,

derneſs, Zion is a Wilderneſs, Jeruſalem a deſolation Our holy and beautiful houſe, where our Fathers praiſed thee, is burnt up with fire: and all our pleaſant things are laid waſte. And if you would ſee this in particulars, you'll find ſorrows ſeldom come alone, and therefore 'twas *Job*'s complaint, Job. 16. 14. That *God brake in upon him with breach upon breach:* and Pſal. 42. 7. *David*, That one *deep called upon another at the noiſe of the Water ſpouts:* and how near he was being ſwallowed up by thoſe depths, his complaints in them ſufficiently witneſs. *Thine arrows*, ſaith he, *ſtick faſt in me, and thine* Pſal. 38. 2. *hand preſſeth me ſore. There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger: neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin.* And ſurely it was ſomething beyond all Pſal. 116. 3. this he felt, when he tells us, *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me, and the pains of Hell got hold upon me, I found trouble and ſorrow.* And what St. *Paul* ſuffer'd by theſe 2 Cor. 11. 25. Waters, even in a litteral ſenſe, he himſelf declares, *Thrice*, ſaith he, *I ſuffered ſhipwrack: a night and a day I have been in the deep: in perils in the Waters, in perils in the City, in perils in the Country, in perils in the Sea:* in ſuch perils, v. 23. as came not ſhort of death it ſelf, as he before expreſſeth it. Nor need we wonder, that this is oftentimes the lot of the Righteous, ſince thereby the Lord declares himſelf to be an Adverſary to Sin in all Men, and the very wicked may themſelves take notice, that he is not partial to any, when his commands are not regarded.

He doth thereby likewiſe reduce his own ſervants from running headlong with the Wicked to Perdition: For were we altogether exempted from the Rod, how ſecure and careleſs, how wanton or froward would we grow; and into how many perils would we caſt our ſelves: and 1 Cor. 11. 32. therefore the Apoſtle, to our comfort, aſſures us. *When we are judged, we are chaſtened of the Lord, that we ſhould not be condemned with the World.* Erring Souls are corrected,

rected, that they may be converted, not confounded. Such is the goodneſs of our God, that his very Anger proceeds from Mercy; and if he ſcourges the Fleſh, it is for no other reaſon, but, *That the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus.* 1 Cor. 5. 5.

Many and uſeful are the Inferences which might be deduced from this point; but I ſhall only at preſent exhort you to look for, and provide againſt theſe uncomfortable ſteps in your Chriſtian Race, that they occur not with the advantage of a ſurpriſe, and ſo diſcourage you from going on in the way to bliſs. He that goes to Sea, eſpecially if he ingage in a long Voyage, muſt expect to meet with many a cold Blaſt, many a daſhing Wave, and now and then a violent Storm and Tempeſt, before he arrives at his intended Harbour; and they who ingage for Heaven ſhould do the like. Sit down and conſider what it may coſt them before they come there. And their not doing it, is the great reaſon of moſt, or of all thoſe ſhameful Apoſtacies, by which the Name of God, and Religion, are ſo much diſhonoured; namely, when Men fall off from hopeful beginnings, and as the Apoſtle has it, *End in the Fleſh after they had begun in the Spirit.* The reaſon muſt be, becauſe they conſider'd not what they undertook. And therefore our Saviour admoniſhes his Proſelites to compute firſt the difficulties incident to their Profeſſion. He would have Men that come to him, and pretend to embrace his Religion, to count the coſt of it, to know the worſt of things, and to conſider all that may happen; and that he may not enſnare them, by propoſing too eaſie terms, he bids them reckon upon the worſt, and tells them, that he that will not *Take up his Croſs, and deny himſelf. He that will not forſake Father and Mother, and all that he hath ſhall not be his Diſciple.* And that, *Through much Tribulation we muſt enter into the Kingdom of God.* And accordingly Mat. 16. 24. Acts. 14. 22.

Eccluſ. 2. 12. accordingly the wiſe Son of *Syrach* adviſes, *My Son if thou come to ſerve the Lord, prepare thy Soul for Temptation.* That is, if thou intend'ſt to enter upon a Religious and Vertuous courſe, thou muſt forethink the Impediments, as well as the Incouragements, the Conflicts as well as the Crown, and arm thy ſelf with reſolution accordingly. And without this, we ſhall be in danger upon every little attack to be ſurpriz'd and beaten off: As was no leſs a Man than St. *Peter* himſelf, who in a zealous pang of Devotion to his Maſter, tells him, Mark 14. 29, 31. *If all men ſhould forſake thee, yet will not I; if I ſhould die with thee, I will not deny thee*; but he had not ſeriouſly conſidered the matter, nor bethought him of what might enſue, there was no preparation for a real encounter: And therefore it ſped accordingly, and he came off ſhameſully; whereas, *Job* being thus fore-arm'd, rode out the greateſt greateſt Storm, that perhaps any meer Man was ever expoſed to, without flinching from his Integrity and ſteddy Temper, notwithſtanding all his Temptations to the contrary; and he plainly enough hints at the reaſon and ground of it in Job 3, 25. theſe words, *The thing which I greatly feared, is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me.* Intimating, that in the midſt of all his affluence, in his moſt ſecure and proſperious ſtate, he had thoughts and fears of a change; he knew all his Worldly comforts to be mutable and vain, and that a ſtorm might overtake him, which might force him to throw them all overboard, and be content with his life for a prey; and accordingly he provided for it: ſo that when it indeed fell out, as he feared, he was prepared to meet it; though not without danger, yet without ſurprize; and as in his Job 31. 24, 25, 27, 28. proſperity he could ſay, *If I have made Gold my hope, or rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great; or becauſe my hand had gotten much, my Mouth hath kiſs'd my Hand, this were an Iniquity,*

Iniquity, for I should have denyed the God that is above. So in his Adversity he could with the same Evenness of Temper consider, and conclude, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord.* And it was doubtless, the Foresight of his Affliction that made it thus light and easie, and one special Ground of his unparallel'd Patience, under the greatest Crosses that the Censures and Discomforts of Friends, the Temptations of a Wife, or the Malice of Satan could possibly inflict. Job 1. 21.

It was a wise Observation which *Tacitus* made of a great *Roman*, he was *Ambiguarum rerum sciens, eoque intrepidus*, he foresaw, and so, was not so much troubled at evil Events, as those whom they did surprize.

And therefore let it be our Prudence, to foresee Evils before they come, and so we shall the less fear, and the better bear them when they come. Especially if this Foresight be seconded by a good Conscience; a Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Men, this will be as a Wall of Brass, and as Armour of Proof in the day of trouble and distress; it was so to *Hezekiah* in his greatest Affliction, when he lay under the very sentance and apprehension of Death its self, *Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.* This will let us see through these Waters to the Shore; and though the passage may prove dangerous, yet will it waft us safely to the Mansions of Bliss; for, however, the Waters may molest us, yet they shall not overflow us, which is the Second thing. The Churches preservation in this condition, *They shall not overflow thee.* Isa. 38. 1;

The same Man, the Man after God's own Heart, that from his own Experience hath told us, that the *Troubles of the righteous are many*, doth in the same Breath assure us, that *the Lord delivers out of them all.* God is so Psal. 34. 19.

good that he would not ſuffer evil to be, if he were not ſo powerful as to turn it into good. This indeed may ſeem like *Sampſon*'s Riddle; the *Philiſtins* could not underſtand, how Meat ſhould come out of the Eater, or Sweet out of the Sour; nor can the natural Man conceive, how *Tribulation ſhould bring forth Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope*; and *that our light and momentary Afflictions* worketh for us, a far *more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*; but the Experienced Chriſtian finds and knows, that *Though no Affliction for the preſent ſeems to be joyous but grievous: Nevertheleſs, afterwards it worketh the peaceable Fruit of righteouſneſs, to all them that are exerciſed thereby.* And that which may prove deſtructive to others, ſhall not be injurious or hurtful to the Church. Let Perſecutions be as Fire, the Church ſhall be as *Moſes's Buſh which was burnt, but not conſumed.* Let them be as Water, the Church ſhall be as *Noah*'s Ark which roſe higher and higher as the Waters did ariſe. It is like the Houſe which was built upon a Rock, though it may be ſhaken, it can never be overturned; for *They that truſt in the Lord, ſhall be as Mount Sion which cannot be moved.* It may meet with many a daſhing Wave; The very *Truth*, whereof it is the ſaving Seat, may be eclipſed and obſcured for a time, but they can no more be cruſh'd or overthrown than a Rock with the raging of the Sea. They are heavenly things, and therefore nothing of Earth or Hell can reach to violate or corrupt them.

Rom. 5. 3.
2 Cor. 4. 17.
Heb 12. 11.
Exod. 3. 2.
Gen. 7. 17.
Pſal. 125. 1.

The World was made, that there might be therein a Church to worſhip and contemplate that God that made it, ſo that in the Creation; God never reſted till he came to a Church, to note, that that was the End thereof; and therefore it is eaſier to pull down the World, and to take in pieces the Frame of Nature, than to ruine that Church. The Gates of Hell, all the Policy, Power and Machi-

Machinations of the Kingdom of Darkneſs ſhall never prevail againſt the Church, nor root out the Vine which the Father hath planted. *Though the Kings of the Earth ſtand up, and the Rulers take counſel together againſt the Lord, and againſt his anointed, yet they imagine but a vain thing, and he that ſitteth in Heaven ſhall laugh them to ſcorn.* Pſal. 2. 2, 4. It is but as the coming forth of a Shepherd againſt a Lyon, as the Prophet compares it. It is but to make a Combination to pull the Sun out of Heaven, or for a Wave to contend with a Rock; for all the Smoak of Hell ſhall not be able to extinguiſh, nor all the Power of Hell be able to overturn the Church of Chriſt. Though it may ſeem for a time in as deſperate a Condition as a dry Stick in the Fire, or a dead Body in the Grave, yet in due time it will ſpring up and flouriſh again. And this is the Aſſurance that the Church may have, that God can deliver *a ſecond time*, that he is the ſame God *yeſterday, to day, and for ever*. Therefore, ſuch a God as the Church hath found him heretofore, ſuch a God it ſhall find him to day and for ever in the returns and manifeſtations of his mercy: For, God's former favours (whether they be deliverances from troubles, or comfort and ſupport under them) are Patterns of his future; and he teaches us what he will do, by what he hath done; he that hath found him in one extremity, may very well truſt him in the next; and this we ſhall find to be a frequent argument in Scripture, to conclude God's favour for the preſent, or future, by his proceedings paſt; and the Saints have always armed themſelves againſt preſent dangers with the conſideration of what God had done for themſelves, or others in the like Caſe. This was *Moſes*'s argument to incourage the *Iſraelites* againſt the fear they were in, of the *Anakims*, and Giants of the Land; *Dread not, neither be afraid of them, for the Lord your God which goeth before you, he ſhall fight for you;* Isa. 31. 4. Ezek. 3. 2. Ezek. 37. 11. Isa. 11. 11. Heb. 13. 8.

you; according to all that he did for you in Egypt, be-
Deut. 3. 21. *fore your Eyes, and in the Wilderness.* So *David* argu-
1 Sam. 17. ed against *Goliah*; *The Lord delivered me from a Lyon and*
37. *a Bear, and therefore he will deliver me from this Philistine.* And St. *Paul*, *The Lord hath delivered me from the sentence of Death, and doth deliver; therefore I trust that he will deliver.* These, and other the like Examples were writen for our learning, that we also, *through comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.* Men are oft-times ready to sink under the sense and weight of some present evil that lies heavy on them, because they do not look back to God's former ways of mercy towards the Church in general, or themselves in particular: whereas, if Men would (when the Church is in trouble) thus argue. The Lord hath delivered his Church from the Pride and Oppression of her Enemies heretofore. He hath frustrated the attempts, and taken off the Wheels, on which the Projects against Her did move. As he dealt with *Pharaoh*. He hath amazed the fantasies and dissipated the affections, and melted the spirits, and way-laid and blasted the enterprizes of the hugest Hosts of Men, as he did the
Judg. 17. 22. *Midianites*, and the Children of *Ammon, Moab, and Edom*,
2 Chron. 22. 23. when they gathered together against his People. He hath
2 Sam. 17. 23. Infatuated the Counsels, and turned the Wisdom of Oracles into foolishness; and catch'd the wise in their own craftiness. As he dealt with *Achitophel*; and made them the
Isa. 19. 9. Contrivers, and Artificers, of their own Ruin, as he did
1 King 12. 2 Chron. 10. in the Consultation of *Roboboam*, with his Young Men;
1 King 12. and *Jeroboam* in his Idolatrous Policy; and *Haman*
Esther 7. in his Gallows. He hath defeated their Councils, and
Psal. 36. 10, 11. disannulled their Decrees: and made his own Counsel to
Psal. 44. 4. stand. He hath commanded help from his People for his
Psal. 106. Church; and when that hath fail'd, he hath created help
Psal. 136. for his People: as he did for *Israel*, when he wrought
Jer. 2. 6. Amos 2. 10. Miracles to deliver them; when he led them through

a Wilderneſs, and fed them with an unknown, and unſuſpected Bread, when he armed *Flies*, and *Lice*, and *Duſt*, and *Wind*, and *Stars*, and every ſmall and unexpected Contingency againſt the ſtrongeſt Oppoſition. Exod. 16. 15. Exod. 8. 16. Exod. 14. 21. Judg. 5. 20.

And his Power, Truth, Watchfulneſs, and Compaſſion for his Church, is the ſame ſtill; and therefore though She may ſometimes ſeem to be ſwallowed up; yet will he never ſuffer the Proud Waves to overflow her: He will Defeat thoſe that ſeek to waſte, and depopulate Her; and bring forth his Church with ſhouting, and redoubl'd Graces; like Gold out of the Fire, freed from its Droſs, more Pure, and every way more Refin'd. For *the Lord in the midſt of Her*, ſaith the Prophet, *is Mighty, he will ſave, he will rejoice over her with joy.* And ſurely, when the Lord ſhall have accompliſh'd his work on Mount *Sion*, when he ſhall by the Adverſary, as by a Fan, have purged Iniquity from *Jacob*, and taken away his Sin, he will then return in Peace, and Beauty, to his People again. 2 Sam. 6. 15. Zeph. 3. 17. Iſa. 14. 1. chap. 27. 9.

So likewiſe in particular diſtreſſes, did Men ſtore up the paſſages of God's Providence in their lives, that they might be for Preſidents and Rules in after times, they might with much more eaſe, and comfort, bear thoſe ſtraits, and exigencies, to which they are at any time reduced: And in the midſt of their greateſt difficulties, whether Temporal or Spiritual, thus reaſon with themſelves, and thus comfort themſelves: I have e're now known a great ſcarcity in the Land, and I my ſelf ſuffer'd much in that pinching Seaſon, but yet I did out-live it, and God's Providence cared for me, and carried me through that plunge. I have felt a ſore Diſeaſe, and been in the very mouth of the Grave, and yet I live to praiſe God's Power, who (almoſt miraculouſly) reſtored me to my health. The buffets of Satan have heretofore bruiſed my ſoul, and I have been even drencht in my own ſorrows, and almoſt ſwallowed

up

up of despairing and uncomfortable thoughts, and yet, even *from this body of Death*, the Lord hath deliver'd me, and let the light of his countenance shine on me again. And he is the same God still, as full of compassion to pity my Calamities, as full of Power to effect, as full of Wisdom to contrive, as full of Fidelity to perform his own Promises as before; and therefore, I will wait upon him in the ways of his own Mercy, and cast the whole weight of my guilty spirit upon his Wisdom and Compassion; and empty all the fears, and cares, and requests of my distracted and sinking Soul into his Bosom, and rest upon the Immutability, and All-sufficiency of that God, with whom there's no Variableness, nor shadow of Changing. I say, if Men would thus learn to comfort their hearts, by their experience, and review of God's former proceedings, they would then in the sorest extremity, fix their faith upon God, and rest upon the Power and Promises of him, who is *Alpha*, and *Omega*, the Author, and Finisher of our Faith, who delighteth to be depended on alone, when all outward helps and probabilities fail.

And this is the ground of all diffidence and distrust, that Men consider not the Power and Care of God towards them, but conceive of him, as if he had forgotten to be Gracious, as if he had cast them out of his sight, as if he had given over his thoughts of them, and that makes them fear Second Causes, and seek unto things that cannot profit: And therefore the Lord suffers Second Causes to go cross, and Disappoint a Man; Friends to fail; Promises to be uncertain; Assurances to vanish; Projects and Purposes to be shatter'd; that we may know how to trust him; who loves to be Glorified by our dependance on his All-sufficiency and Protection. And commonly, in our greatest straits, we are surest of his help. *When we walk in darkness, and have no light. When we seek*

Isa. 50.10.

Water,

Water, and there is none, when our Tongue faileth for thirſt; Iſa. 41. 17.
Then is the fitteſt time to help us, and then is our fitteſt time to depend upon him; for Mans extremity, is God's opportunity; and the want of all other helps, drives us Importunately to the God of Power. Well may he forbear to help while we have any thing elſe to rely on; But we ſhall be ſure to find him in our greateſt Exigencies, who loves to give ſuccour to thoſe who are deprived of all other Hopes. That merciful Hand is reſerved for a dead Liſt, and then to be ſure, he fails us not. As when *Abraham* had given *Iſaac*, and *Iſaac* had given himſelf for dead, when the Knife was falling upon his Throat, then comes the Deliverance by an Angel, calling, forbidding, and commending him. And indeed, our Faith is moſt commendable in the laſt Act, it is no Praiſe to hold out till we be hard driven. Nothing more eaſie than to truſt God while our Cheſts and Coffers are full, and to pray, and depend on him for our daily Bread, while we have it by us, this is to walk by Senſe, rather than Faith. But to rely on him in the greateſt Deſtitution, and againſt Hope to believe in Hope, this is the Faith of a true Child of *Abraham*, and will be imputed to us (as it was to him) for Righteouſneſs. When we dare caſt our ſelves on his Care, when to outward Appearance he ſeems not at all to care for us. When we ſo look on our Miſeries, that we can withal look through them. When we have nothing, nor know whence, or how, to get any thing; then to depend upon an inviſible Bounty, is a true and notable act of Faith; and indeed, God counts himſelf moſt honoured, when Men believe in him againſt Reaſon, and above Hope, and beyond the experience or apprehenſion they have of mercy; and never commonly are we nearer to help, than when we almoſt deſpair of it; for the Lord is a Sun, a Sheild, a Fountain of

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all Good, to cheriſh, defend, and ſupply us; *Grace and*
Pſal. 84. 11. *Glory, will he give, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly, and confide on him.* When theres no light nor iſſue, nor in nature poſſibility of eſcape; then can God open a door of deliverance to relieve his Church. And therefore let us never repine at the miſcarriages of the World, nor murmur againſt the wiſe proceedings of God in the ſeveral diſpenſations towards his Church on Earth: when he puniſheth, he doth it in meaſure, leſs then our ſins deſerve; and when we ſearch and try our ways, and turn to him, he knoweth how to work his own Glory in our Deliverance. And though we muſt *paſs through the Waters*, yet *they ſhall not overflow us*, and the reaſon is, *He is with us.*

Which is the third and laſt thing, to wit, the effectual Cauſe of the Church's preſervation; *God's Preſence.*

What God ſpake of the Material, is moſt true of the Spiritual Temple, his Church and choſen Ones.
2 Chron. 7. 16. *I have choſen this Place, that my Name may be there for Ever: and my Heart, and my Eyes ſhall be there perpetually.* God is indeed preſent in all places, and with all Men; but with great difference. He gives light by his Preſence to his *Iſrael* the Church; but ſtrikes terror
Ezek. 2. 5. into the *Egyptians*, the Enemies thereof. *He is a Wall of Fire, to fence and preſerve the one*; and to conſume and deſtroy the other: the ſame *Waters are a Wall to defend his*
Exod. 14. 20. v. 28. *own People, and to overflow their enemies.* What the Cloud by day, and the Pillar of Fire by night was to the *Iſraelites*, when they paſſed through the Deſert to *Canaan*, the ſame is God's Preſence to his People while they wander through the Wilderneſs of this World to Heaven. What the Planck is, to the Shipwrackt Mariner; that is God's Preſence to the Saint carrying him ſafe to Shore; and (as one Expreſſes it) what a Convoy is for the guarding, a Pilot for the guiding

of

of a Ship, and a Faithful and Skilful Friend to comfort in a Storm; all this is God's Preſence to the Church in Her Afflictions. He is preſent to defend her from all her Enemies, to ſtrengthen, comfort, and uphold her in all her ſufferings; to reſcue, deliver and protect her from all her dangers: according to that of the Prophet, *I am with thee, ſaith the Lord, to ſave thee.* Jer. 30.11

The Opperations of this Preſence, are various and excellent, according to the determination of his Wiſdom, for his own Glory and our Good: and many and Miraculous are the Means, which he uſeth to deliver us out of the Waters.

Sometimes he provides an Ark as he did for *Noah*: Sometimes he ſends a Nurſe, as he did for *Moſes*, to take him out of the waters: Sometimes he provides *Boards*, as he did for *Paul* and the reſt of his company when the Ship was ſplit, whereby *they eſcaped ſafe to Land.* Gen. 7. Exod. 2.7. Act. 27.44.

Sometimes he divides the Waters, as he did the Red-Sea for *Iſrael*; He ſets the Enemies of his Church one againſt another, and by dividing them, preſerves his own: thus the Lord ſet every Mans ſword againſt his fellow, in the Huge Hoſt of the *Midianites.* Sometimes he ſtops the current, or turns the ſtream of Waters, ſo that they run no longer againſt the peace and quiet of his People. As when *Eſau* was meeting *Jacob* with one Troop, *Laban* following him with another, both with Hoſtile Intentions, and both go on to the very utmoſt point of Execution, and yet both are diverted from their purpoſe, for ſtay but a while, and you ſhall ſee *Eſau* meet him with a Kiſs, and *Laban* leave him with another: he hath an Oath from the one, Tears from the other, and Peace from both. Let our Enemies be never ſo mighty, their hearts are in God's Judg. 7.22.

hands, and he can turn them like the Rivers of Waters, and make them be at peace with us; according to that of
Prov. 16 7. the wiſe King, *When a Mans ways pleaſe the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him.* In a word, tho' this Divine Preſence ſhould not exempt us from, yet will it be our Refuge in the Storm, if he deliver not out of the Waters, yet he will by them; if he ſave not from trouble, yet he will make the very trouble, a means of ſafety: And though we ſhould periſh Temporally in the waters of diſtreſs, yet will he be with us, to ſave us Eternally in the Manſions of Bliſs.

And this is the only Rock on which we may caſt Anchor, in any trouble, fear, or diſtreſs: It's not our own Will, or Skill, or Strength, or Contrivance, that keeps us above water, and preſerves us from ſinking; but only that Divine Preſence that ſuffers not the waters to overflow us. St. *Paul* and his Company were in a
Act. 27. 20. great Tempeſt, *All hope that they ſhould be ſaved, was taken away*, yet he exhorts them to be of good chear, becauſe there ſhould not be the loſs of any Mans Life amongſt them: And the ground hereof was God's Pro-
v. 24, 25. miſe (ſuch another as in the Text) which he believ'd.

The caſe is the ſame with us, our Enemies come againſt us in Armies, with infinite methods and ſtratagems to circumvent us, we are compaſſed about with infirmities, with enemies too hard, and ſins too heavy for us, with fears and doubtings, with diſidence and diſtruſt. How can we in ſuch Tempeſts and Dificulties be cheer'd, but only by caſting Anchor on God's promiſe
Rom. 4 18. to be with us? By learning *to hope above hope*: to be ſtrong in him, when we are weak in our ſelves; to be faithful in him, when we are fearful in our ſelves; to be ſtedfaſt in him, when we ſtagger in our ſelves. In a word, in the mid'ſt of Satans buffets, and our own corruptions; to find a ſufficiency in his Grace,

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able to anſwer, and to ward off all. Nor are we only beſet with enemies, but which is worſt of all, we are enemies to our ſelves, the burden of the fleſh, the aſſaults of the world, the fiery darts of Satan; ſwarms of *Midianites*, troops of *Amalakites*, the Sea before us, the *Egyptians* behind us, Sin before, Satan and the World behind: Either I muſt run on and be drowned in ſin, or I muſt ſtand ſtill and be hew'd in pieces with the perſecutions of wicked Men, or elſe revolt, and turn back to *Egypt*, and be devour'd in her plagues. In theſe extremities the Apoſtle directs us, *to look unto Jeſus who is the Author, and will be the finiſher of our Faith*: who will carry us through all theſe difficulties, who is our Captain to lead us, our Second and Fellow Combatant, to Fight with us, and for us. It's yet but a little while, he will come, and will not tarry, he is within the view of our faith, he is within the cry of our prayers, *he ſitteth at the Right-Hand, of Power*: Nay, he there ſtandeth, and is riſen up already in the Quarrel of his Saints. The nearer the *Egyptian* is to *Iſrael*, the nearer he is to Ruin, and the nearer *Iſrael* is to Deliverance. Though *Moſes* have not Chariots nor multitudes of Weapons, yet he hath a *Rod*, a Branch, an Angel of God's Preſence, which can open the Sea, and give an Iſſue to the greateſt Danger, and turn the Enemies Rage into his own Ruine. And therefore, whenever we are aſſaulted, whenever we are oppreſs'd with any heavy Temptation, with Diſcomforts, Fears, Faintings, Wearineſs, Deſpair, or the like; let us not toſs over our own Store, nor depend upon any Strength or Principles of our own, but look only by Faith to the Promiſes and Victories of Chriſt, who hath himſelf already triumphed, who accounteth our Temptations his, and his Victories ours, who turned the greateſt Perplexities which the World ſhall ever ſee into a

2 Cor. 12. 10.

Heb. 12. 1

Acts 7. 56.

Luke 21. 25, 28. Doctrine of Comfort unto his Diſciples; and by whom we ſhall be able to do all things; and though we were ſurrounded by Enemies, to eſcape, as he did, through the middſt of them all. And therefore were thy Soul in ſuch a ſtraight as *Iſrael* between the Red Sea and the *Egyptians*. The Spirits of Vengeance, Satan and his Accomplices, like thoſe Enemies, purſuing thee behind, Death and Hell, like the Sea, ready to ingulph thee before, yet would I ſpeak to thee in the Confidence of Exod. 14. 13. *Moſes*. *Stand ſtill and ſee the Salvation of the Lord.* Hence, all ye diffident Fears. He whom we truſt 2 Chron. 16. 89. is Omnipotent. Whoſe *Eyes run too and fro to ſhew himſelf valiant in the Behalf of thoſe that walk uprightly.*

Prov. 18. 10. *The Name of the Lord is a ſtrong Tower, the Righteous runneth unto it, and is ſafe:* this Tower is impregnable by all the forces of Satan and his Inſtruments: this Fortreſs is proof againſt all their Attempts: He that quits this Caſtle, is ſure to periſh; but he that holds faſt by this Stony Rock ſhall never be confounded. Let our Enemies rage, let *Matchiavel*, and his Brethren the Jeſuits Plot: let the Devil and all the Powers of Hell roar; they ſhall never be able to Scale the Walls of this Tower, whoſe top reacheth up to Heaven: It will be to no purpoſe to contend with him, at whoſe very chideing the Foundations of the Earth are diſcover'd, and at whoſe touch the Mountains ſmoak; and therefore the Nah. 1. 6. Prophet *Nahum* asks *Who can ſtand before his Indignation? and who can abide the fierceneſs of his Wrath? his fury is poured out like fire, the Rocks are thrown down by him.* God need not move a foot to the reſcue of his Saints, he can but ſpeak the Word, and command a ſilly Army of *Flies*, *Lice*, *Graſs-hoppers*, and the like, to execute his Judgments and Vengeance on His, and the Churches Enemies. His Arm is never ſhortned, he can overthrow the Dragon, ſmite the Horſe and his Rider; drown whole

whole Armies in the Sea, when his own People ſhall go through on dry Land: He can make a Path in the great Waters, allay the heat of Fire: He can hold Satan in a Chain, and curb the whole Power of Hell.

If then, *he be with us, who can be againſt us?* Indeed who will not be againſt us, but who ſo againſt us as to hurt us. *The Lord is with us*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, and what follows, *The God of Jacob is our Refuge.* Rom. 8. 31. Pſal. 46 7.

It's the deriding queſtion which the Saints Enemies put to them in Affliction, *where is now their God?* But *Davids* enemies in good earneſt, ſeem to own the efficacy of this Divine Preſence, when they cry out, *God hath forſaken him, perſecute him and take him*: ſecretly acknowledging, that while God is nigh his People, their Enemies may purſue them, but not overtake them. And therefore the Lord himſelf diſſwades from fear, upon this very ground, *Fear thou not, for I am with thee: I will ſtrengthen thee, yea I will help, yea I will uphold thee, with the Right Hand of my Righteouſneſs.* In the greateſt and moſt ſurprizing difficulties then, ſay to thy ſelf, as *David* did, *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted, within me? hope thou in God*: And that not only when the Waters are low, but when they riſe to the height; not only in leſſer troubles, but in the greateſt exigencies: *For the Lord on high is mightier, than the noiſe of many waters: Yea then the mighty waves of the Sea.* And therefore conſider not ſo much thy diſtreſs, as thy Deliverer; and when the mercileſs waves are ready to overflow thee, commit thy ſelf to his cuſtody; at whoſe Preſence the waters flee and give back. *The Waters ſaw thee O God, the Waters ſaw thee, and were affraid.* Do but ſecure an Intereſt in him, and then thou mayeſt in the midd'ſt of the great'ſt dangers conclude, with *David, The Lord is my light, and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear? the Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom then ſhall I be affraid?* Pſal. 79. 10. Pſal. 71. 11. Iſa. 41. 10. Pſal. 42. 11. Pſal. 93. 4. Pſal. 77. 6. ch. 114. 5. Pſal. 27. 1.

Verſ. 3. 5. *affraid? Though an Hoſt ſhould encamp againſt me, my heart ſhall not fear: though Wars ſhould riſe againſt me, yet in this I will be confident; for in the time of trouble he ſhall hide me in his Pavilion, in the ſecret of his Tabernacle will he hide me, and ſet me upon a Rock.*

Secondly, Is God's Preſence the Churches refuge, the effectual Cauſe of her ſafety? then let the glory be his, let him have the honour, let not us at any time (though we have been ſucceſsful inſtruments) invade his Perogative, or preſume to ſhare in his Praiſes, who is the ſole Author of all our Deliverances. *Pilat's* mingling the blood of the *Galileans* with their Sacrifices is recorded by the Luk. 13. 1. Evangeliſt as a blemiſh never to be wiped off. And for us to mingle the ſweat of our own endeavours, with the Sacrifices of our Praiſes, is a crime not to be forgiven: 'Tis a Sacrilegious robbing God of his Honour. Neither our wit or forecaſt, our ſtrength or power, our money or friends, or any thing whatſoever muſt come in for a part in his praiſes: All theſe are but as Inſtruments in God's Hand who actuates and applies them when, and how, he himſelf pleaſes. But yet the Power, Providence, and Protection of God, doth not, for all this, warrant us to ſlacken our own induſtry, or to expect that he ſhould ſuccour us in our idleneſs and negligence. Judg. 7. 18. The *Sword of the Lord*, doth not Fight without *the Sword of Gideon*: But 'tis he alone that can ſtrengthen, aſſiſt and proſper our ordinary and juſt endeavours for our ſelves. In the Miracles of Chriſt, when he fed and feaſted Men, we never find that he created Bread or Wine of nothing, but bleſſed, and ſo changed, or multiplied that which was by humane induſtry prepar'd before: To note, that God's Power and Providence muſt not exclude, but incourage Man's Induſtry. So long as Exod. 17. 12, 13. *Moſes* held up his hands, God fought for *Iſrael*. There was *Joſhuah's* Sword, and *Moſes's* Hand or Prayer, and upon

upon thoſe God's Bleſſing: And they were all to concur, if the Sword ſhould ceaſe, the Prayer would do no good, for God will not be tempted, if the Prayer faint, the the Sword is in vain, for God will not be neglected: If God promiſe to be preſent, *Joſhua* muſt promiſe to be couragious: But yet ſtill let the glory be his; for when all is done, unleſs *He keep the City, the watch man watcheth in vain. Unleſs he build the houſe, their labour is but in vain that build it.* Unleſs he give the increaſe, the planting of *Paul*, and the watering of *Appollo* is but loſt labour. It's for Worldlings who are ignorant of Divine Providence, to boaſt of their Exploits, and like the Fly in the Fable (that ſat on the Chariot Wheel) to ſay, *Quantam vim pulveris excitavi*, what a mighty Duſt have I raiſed? What great things have we done? whereas the faithful in the mideſt of their greateſt Atchievements look off from themſelves, and piouſly conclude, *Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name be the glory.* They know full well, that unleſs he be pleaſed to favour their Attempts, neither the Plotting of their Heads, nor the Solicitouſneſs of their Hearts, nor the Strength or Drugery of their Hands, nor the whole Concurrence of their created Strength, nor any acceſſory Aſſiſtances which they can procure, will be able to bring to paſs the otherwiſe moſt obvious and feaſible Events: And therefore it concerns us to own our dependance on him, to Implore his direction in all our Counſels, His concurrence with all our Actions, His bleſſing on all our Undertakings, and his Glory as the ſole End of all that either we are, or do.

Joſh. 1. 5, 6, 9.

Pſal. 127. 1.

Pſal. 115. 1.

Thirdly, If God will be with us in the Waters, let us not forſake God for fear of the Waters, as do thoſe Cowards in Religion who quit this fortreſs, revolt from the God of Power, and rely wholy on the Arm of Fleſh, vaunting, and even Blaſpheming, as *Sennacherib* did

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in his mighty Army, which one Angel deſtroyed in one Night. It is not ſeldom ſeen that Perſecution makes Men forego their Profeſſion. And, which argues as little Policy as Piety (as One obſerves) for fear of the Storm they run from their Shelter. Worldlings think there is no Hope left, when Mens Strength or Contrivance fail; and juſt it is with God to leave them, who firſt leave him, and fly to broken Reeds which ſtand them in no ſtead in the day of Trouble. But you that are God's People, keep cloſe to the Sanctuary of God's Power, and never forget that ſacred Aphoriſm of *Azariah*, to *Aſa* and his People. *The Lord is with you while you be with him: But if you forſake him he will forſake you.*

2 Chron. 15. 2.

And how fatal ſuch a deſertion will prove, eſpecially at this time, who ſees not? We ſhall be thereby depriv'd of the Protection of the Almighty, left *naked among our Enemies*, and laid open to the Rage and Fury of our moſt bitter Adverſaries; and the Lord may ſay to us as ſometime to *Iſrael*, *Ye have forſaken me, therefore have I left you in the hand of Shiſhak*, their moſt inveterate and cruel Enemie: And we may then with too much reaſon, and from a woful experience aſſent, to that of the Prophet. *Behold the Lord's Hand is not ſhorten'd that it cannot ſave; neither is his Ear heavy that it cannot hear: but your Iniquities have ſeparated betwixt you and your God; and your Sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*

2 Chron. 12. 5.

Iſa. 59. 1.

You are, under Divine Providence, the Bulwarks and Ramparts of our Nation: our Strongeſt Gariſons (conſidering our Situarion) are thoſe Wooden Caſtles commited to your Skill and Care, to your Valour and Conduct.

Our Engliſh Arms, eſpecially by Sea, have been and are at this inſtant fear'd all the World over; and we now ride Soveraign, not only on the Ocean, but the Mi-

diteranean

ranean too; A thing not known before. But though this be much, yet it will be in vain to rely upon it or ought elſe of this kind, while thoſe Sins are ſo rife and common amongſt us which uſually provoke God's Wrath againſt a People; while Piety, ſo neceſſary to true Valour and good Succeſs, is ſo little minded and ſo generally ſlighted.

We all own, there is a Holy and Powerful God, who can beſt *teach our hands to War and our fingers to Fight.* Who is the Wiſe Diſpoſer of all Events. Who hath been by no other Name more known to his own People than *the Lord of Hoſts*: and who will appear on one ſide or other when Armies and Fleets engage, and whatever ſide he is pleaſed to Eſpouſe will be ſure to be Victorious: And how much then doth it concern us to ſecure an Alliance with him, that he appear not againſt us? To draw our eyes form Forts and Towers, from Armies and Fleets, and make him our Tower and Fortreſs if we would be ſafe; How much doth it concern us to repent of thoſe Sins that may ſeperate between him and us? to ſubdue our own Luſts, and conquer our Selves, and diſcard our Vices? A Victory of this kind firſt accquir'd, would be a moſt happy preſage of the fall of all our Enemies before us. Pſal.144.1.

And as Piety, ſo Juſtice and Charity are abſolutely requiſite to make you Proſperous and Succeſsful. This is certain. Beneficence and Charity give Men a Peculiar Title to the Favour and Bleſſing, and Protection of Almigyty God in this Life: and doth contribute as much or more than any thing towards our Happineſs in the Life to come. And therefore, our Saviour calls it *Laying up for our ſelves treaſure in Heaven.* It is, ſaith one, the putting ſo much Stock into the Hands of God, to be there ſecur'd and improv'd for us and ours, and that upon the beſt aſſurance, even his own Word, of having Pſal. 41. 1, 2, 3. Luk. 6. 20.

ſo much of it paid again to us or to ours in this World, as he in his Wiſdom knows to be beſt for us; according to that Scripture, *He that hath pitty on the Poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again.* So that if we look no further then this life it ſelf, this is really the beſt improvement we can make of our Wealth: For *there is that ſcatereth and yet encreaſeth, and there is that witholdeth more then is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat, and he that watereth ſhall be water'd alſo himſelf.* But then if we conſider what advantage it may be to us in the next; it will appear to be much more ſo. It is the certain, if not the only courſe that rich Men can take to work that Miracle for themſelves of getting into the Kingdom of Heaven. It is nothing but Mens coveteouſneſs, their ſetting their Heart upon their riches, their placeing their confidence in them, or their abuſing them in miniſtring to their Pride or Senſuallity, that makes it *as hard for them to enter in there, as for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle.* Now the contrary uſe of them will remove this difficulty, it will make them *Friends of the of unrighteous Mammon that when they fail they may receive them into everlaſting Habitations.* It will ſecure the prayers of the Poor Saints upon them and their Eſtates, *The eyes which ſee them will bleſs them, and the ear that hears them will give witneſs to them,* and the loins and the mouths, the backs and the bellies of the Poor and the Fatherleſs, will be as ſo many real Supplications to God for them. So that a right uſe of their temporal wealth will both increaſe their ſtore here, and make way to Immortality, and an Eternal reward hereafter. *Caſt thy bread upon the Waters,* ſaith the Wiſe King, *for thou ſhalt find it after many days.* The words are variouſly explained, but I think he deviates not far, who conceives them to be an alluſion to Husband-Men, who do not eat up, or ſell away

Prov. 19. 17.

Prov. 11. 24, 25.

Luk. 16. 19.

Eccle. 11. 1.

way all their Corn, for then the World would quickly be deſtitute: But the way they take to perpetuate the Fruits of the Earth, is to caſt ſome of it back again into a fruitful Soil, where the Waters come, and then in due time they receive it with increaſe: ſo ſhould we do with theſe Worldly bleſſings, ſow them in the Bowels, and on the Backs of the poor Members of Chriſt, and in the day of Harveſt we ſhall find a great increaſe. *If thou draw out thy ſoul to the Righteous, and ſatisfie the afflicted ſoul, then ſhall thy light riſe in obſcurity, and thy darkneſs be as the Noon-day*, then *thy Waters*, that is, thy Riches *ſhall not lye unto thee*; but that happineſs which they falſly promiſe unto other Men, they ſhall really perform unto thee. And therefore it ſhould be our great care to do good to thoſe that are in want. That ſo *the bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh may come upon us*: to be rich in good works, and to eſteem that the beſt and moſt valuable part of our Wealth that's thus beſtow'd: becauſe it will be of uſe to us in the next life, in reſpect of which this is leſs than a Moment. Iſa. 58. 10, 11. Job 29. 13.

It is the Goodneſs of God to give us oppurtunities of making the beſt and trueſt uſe of our Wealth, and of improving it to our Eternal advantage, as well as in placing us in that more happy Station of being Givers rather than Receivers. Our Bleſſed Lord profeſſeth himſelf to be ſtill hungry, naked, ſick and in priſon, and to ſtand in need of our viſits and ſupplys. For as he hath Strength enough and Compaſſion to take off the burden of our afflictions; ſo hath he Poverty enough too, to eaſe that trouble and vexation which may grow from our abundance. If thou hadſt (ſaith a late Pious and Learned Prelate) a whole Wardrope of caſt Apparel, Chriſt hath more Nakedneſs then all that can cover; if whole Barns full of Corn and Cellars of Wine, Chriſt hath more empty Bowels then all that can fill; if all the pre-

cious Drugs in a Countrey, Chriſt hath more Sickneſs than all that can Cure; if the Power of a mighty Prince, Chriſt hath more Impriſonments than all that can enlarge; if Sacks full of Silver and Gold, Chriſt hath more diſtreſſed Members to be comforted, more Breaches in his Church to be repair'd, more Enemies of his Truth to be Oppoſed; more Defenders of his Faith to be ſupply'd; more Pious Offices to be attended, then all that will ſerve for.

And this may leſſen the trouble that may ariſe from the Management of a great Eſtate, and from a load of abundauce of Earthly things, that Chriſt hath Poverty and Sickneſs and other occaſions enough to employ it; And for our incouragement to part with it, he hath promiſed that a cup of cold water given in his Name ſhall not go unrewarded: and that what we do in feeding the Hungry, clothing the Naked, viſiting the Sick, relieving the Needy and thoſe that are in Priſon, he ſhall take as done to himſelf. *Verily inaſmuch as ye have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Yea, ſo far is he concern'd in the diſtreſſes and wants of his own, that the rule whereby at the laſt day he will judge of Mens affections, of their love or hatred to himſelf, is the ſincerity of their love and liberality, their hatred and averſion to his Brethren and Members here: for in all their afflictions he is afflicted. And yet how many are now in the World whoſe love extends not beyond themſelves, who wallow in Plenty and Abundance, and yet take no pitty either upon the Souls or Temporal neceſſities of thoſe with whom they yet pretend a fellowſhip in Chriſt's own Body. Who conſume more upon their Pride and Luxury, their Pleaſures and Exceſſes, their Luſts and Senſuality than ever they can perſwade themſelves to confer upon the Poor Saints. Surely at the Day of Judgment however ſuch Men here profeſs to love Chriſt; they ſhall yet meet with that dread-

Matt. 25. 40.

Verſ. 45.

dreadful ſentence, *Dapart from me ye Curſed into everlaſting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*: And why ſo? *For I was an hungry, and ye gave me no meat, I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a ſtranger, and ye took me not in: naked and ye clothed me not:* which are the reaſons of their Rejection. And yet we have ſome amongſt us who may well dread a heavyer Doom; for if they that give not to the Poor ſhall be adjudg'd to Everlaſting Fire; what may they expect who leſſen or take away that little which they have: againſt whom the Great Judge will at the laſt day thus proceed, *Depart from me ye Curſed into Everlaſting Fire*: For I had Meat and Drink, but ye forc'd it from me: I had a Houſe, but you turn'd me out: I had Cloaths, but you ſtrip'd me: I was at Liberty, but you Impriſon'd me: I was in Health, but by your Exactions and Oppreſſions, and the other Hardſhips you put upon me you made me Sick. The Parable damns the evil Servant for not Improving his Talent, though he miſpent it not. *Dives* for not helping *Lazarus* though he hurt him not, and if that dreadful Sentence be thundred out againſt thoſe who have not ſuccour'd and reliev'd the Poor, What ſhall be the End of them who have Oppreſs'd and Cruſh'd the Poor, that do Grind their Faces, and Inrich themſelves with the Spoils of the Fatherleſs and the Widow; Surely if omiſſion of good Duties be whip'd with Rods, commiſſion of Impieties ſhall be ſcourg'd with Scorpions.

But I forget where I am; there being but little need to inſiſt upon this Topick in this Place; where Munificence and Charity, Pity and Compaſſion, do dwell and ſhine in all their Luſtre: ſuch a Charity as teacheth Men to lend without any hope of receiving again; and to ſuccour thoſe that can make no other Return than by their Bleſſings and their Prayers. A Charity that extends

extends not only to those who are admitted, and to their Families, but to the Common Wealth. What an incouragement must it be to Engage in your Usefull and Honourable Profession, tho' attend'd with never so many dangers? to see those who have been Maim'd or grown Aged in it, or by cross providencies otherwise reduc'd, so carefully and comfortably provided for as they are here; where you at once provide for the Soul and Body; Relieve the helpless Man and the solitary Widow, take care of a present and future Subsistance. Which next to the Divine Succour and Protection (as One hath observ'd) is the most likely way to preserve the Christian Faith it self among us, the rare Effects whereof we see and may justly admire in the Publick works of Charity which abound in and near this great City, than which the World affords no greater. And after all the boasts of Charity in the Church of *Rome*, it will be hard to find any thing there to be fit to come in Competition with them; where you do in the most ample manner, Cloath the Naked. Feed the Hungry, Heal the Sick, and Provide for the Destitute; this is so Blessed a Work, that nothing but want of ability can excuse any Man from giving Assistance to it.

What Happy Foundations are these, how Benificiall to our Countrey in comparison of the old Monasteries that were the Seats of Idleness and Superstition? And what a Glory had it been to our Reformation (in every thing else a most Glorious Work) had the Revenues of those Places not been disposed of into private hands, or appli'd to any other than such Publick Uses as these; whereas now our Adversaries upbraid us with *their* Misaplication as the great Blemish of our Separation from them; as if the coveting the Churches Patrimony, rather then the avoiding their Errors had brought it about. And can Point to many Places where Dogs and Horses, Hawks

Hawks and Hounds grow fat with God's Portion, while the Poor Preacher grows lean with want, and hard Studying how to ſupply the temporal neceſſities of his Family, rather than the ſpiritual wants of his People; by which means Prophecying in many Places comes to fail, and what the Iſſue will be, let *Solomon* tell you. Prov. 29. 18.

I know it's uſually ſaid, that the conferring of thoſe Lands upon the Laiety, hath proved to be the beſt Bulwark that could be thought of againſt the ruturn of Popery. I am apt to believe it indeed: for whatever Men may do as to their Religion, they will be ſure not eaſily to part with their Eſtates. But had they been leſs in Laymens Hands, if they had been Intruſted to ſuch (Uſeful and Charitable Societies as Yours) which had in ſome meaſure anſwer'd the Pious intent of the Doners? But they are now otherwiſe Settl'd, and much good may their Lands do them; but it's well if their witholding the Tythes due out of thoſe Lands, prove not the moſt effectual way to bring in Popery; for when all is done, a Painful, Conſciencious, and Learned Clergy will prove the beſt Fence againſt it.

Who that Man is, mention'd by St. *Paul Whom the Lord will conſume with the Spirit of his Mouth.* I am not to determine. If it be not his *Holineſs*, yet, if you read how he is deſcrib'd in the following words, you'll find he looks very like him; but whether he be meant or no, this is certain, that the Sword of the Spirit in the hands of a Faithful and Powerful Miniſtery will prove the beſt, and every way the moſt effectual Weapon for his Overthrow. But alas what Incouragements have Men of Parts or Learning, or of more then ordinary Abilities to ingage in a Profeſſion, more expoſed to Poverty and Contempt than any other. 2 Theſ. 2. 8.

There are according to *Cambden's* Computation but 9248 Pariſhes in *England*, and of them almoſt 4000 are Impro-

Impropriated. And whereas *They that Preach the Goſpel, ſhould live of the Goſpel*, that is, they ſhould live, firſt, As *Believers*. *He that provides not for his own is worſe then an Infidel*: therefore they ſhould have by the Goſpel ſufficient to lay up for thoſe whom the Law of common Humanity, much more of Faith commands them to provide for. 2. They ſhould live as Miniſters, they ſhould have where with to maintain the Duties of their Calling, as good Examples of Piety, Charity and Hoſpitality: that they may confirm by Practice what in Doctrine they teach. Yet in many of thoſe Pariſhes that are Impropriated, they have ſcarce wherewith to live as *Men*, nothing for Delight, and in ſome of them hardly enough for neceſſity. And this (as * *Calvin* juſtly complains) is the great Ingratitude of the World. as well as the malice and policy of Satan, by the Poverty and Contempt of the Miniſters to bring the Goſpel it ſelf into Contempt; and to deter Men of Learning and Abilities from adventureing on ſo unreward'd a Calling. But this is too much by the by to be farther Inſiſted on here. Only it were to be wiſh'd that ſome Courſe might be thought of (though it were at the Clergies own Expence by a new Purchaſe) to Re-appropriate theſe Impropriate, not Lands but Tythes to the Church. This were a ſure way to increaſe our ſtore, and to entitle our Poſterity, at leaſt, to all the bleſſings of this life and that which is to come. *Honour the Lord with thy Subſtance and the firſt fruits of all thy increaſe: ſo ſhall thy Barns be filled with Plenty and thy Preſſes burſt out with new Wine. Conſider now from this day and upward, ſince a ſtone hath been laid of my Houſe.* i. e. Since you have put your ſelves to any charge for my Worſhip, *I will ſhurely bleſs you. Ye are curſed with a curſe for ye have robbed me even this whole Nation. Bring ye all the Tythes into my Houſe, and prove me if I will not open the Windows of Heaven and pour you out a Bleſſing that there ſhall be no room to receive it.*

1 Cor. 9. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 8.

* *Hic eſt aſtus ſatanæ, Alimentis fraudare pios Miniſtros, ut eccleſia talibus deſtituatur.* Calvin in Gal. 6. 6. *Satan hac arte tentat doctrina privare Eccleſiam, dum inopiæ & famis metu plurimos abſterret, ne id oneris ſuſcipiant.* Id in 1 Tim. 5. 17.

Prov. 3. 9, 10.

Haggai. 2. 15, 19.

Mal. 3. 9, 10.

If

If Men did really and in good earneſt believe theſe divine Truths, how is't poſſible they ſhould grudge Almighty God and his Worſhip every farthing that he requires from them of his own Gifts, that they ſhould count any time of their Life, any work of their Hands, any ſheaf of their Corn, any penny of their Purſe thrown quite away that is beſtow'd on God and the Service of his Altar? Think of it as you will, there's none that ever loſt by paying God his Dues; and there's no Man can long thrive by grudging or with-holding them. He cannot avoid being injurious to himſelf as well as unſerviceable to his Neighbour: whereas Pious and Bountiful Perſons render themſelves and others more ſafe and happy; thus the Lord was with *Jacob*, and proſpered *Laban* for his ſake. He was with *Joſeph*, and bleſſed the *Egyptian's* Houſe for his ſake. Every Man who lives to the benefit and uſe of others, is profitable to the World, and doth much advance the happy ſtate of Mankind. But none Contributes more to this, than this Honourable Society, whereof You have the happineſs to be Members, and wherein ſome of you have the honour to Præſide.

It is to You we owe that Commerce and Trade which we hold with the greateſt part of the Habitable World. 'Tis to You we are beholding for the Wealth and Delights of both the *Indies*, which are by your Art and Induſtry, become familiar and common amongſt us. 'Tis to you (I may venture to ſay it) in a great meaſure that we owe our being a People, being by your Proweſs and your Skill, preſerv'd from the Inſults of a Politick and Potent Enemy. 'Tis to you at leaſt (next under God, and the Care of a Wiſe and Valiant Prince, whom the ſame God hath bleſſed us with) that we owe our Peace and Safety, while our Neighbour Nations do lamentably ſuffer under the woful and direful Effects of a laſting War: where their Miſeries are often felt before they are ſeen, and perhaps when they think themſelves ſafe and quiet, may be ſurpriz'd in their Beds, and they themſelves, their families, and effects, cut off and deſtroyed together. But our Seat, like the Prince of *Tyre*, (as the Prophet ſpeaks) being in the mid'ſt of the Seas, God hath thereby ſecured us from ſuch ſudden Outrages and Invaſions from Forreign Enemies. And we ſit every Man *under his own Vine, and under his own Fig Tree*, injoying the peaceably the fruits of our own labours, or our Anceſtors bounty, *and none to make us afraid*, whilſt they poor ſouls are whirl'd about in confuſed and bloody Tumults; they hear the diſmal Cries of Mich. 4. 4.

cruel Adverſaries, the ſhreeks of Women and Children, the thundring of thoſe murdering pieces in their Ears: They ſee their Towns and Cities burning, their Houſes rifled, their Temples ſpoiled, their Wives raviſhed, their Children bleeding on the Pavements, or ſprawling on the mercileſs Pikes: They hear the confuſed noiſe of Men ſounding in their diſtracted Ears, ſome dying, others killing, others inſulting, others reſiſting; they ſee their high-ways ſtraw'd with breathleſs Carcaſes, Men and Horſes wallowing in their own blood, and the ghaſtly viſages of Wounds and Death in every corner. While we, whoſe caſe it might as well have been (and it was the caſe of ſome of our fellow Subjects not long ſince) do like thoſe in the Prophet, *Lye upon Beds of Ivory, and ſtretch our ſelves upon our Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, and the Calves out of the midſt of the ſtall. While we chaunt to the Viol, and drink Wine in bowls, and anoint our ſelves with the chief Ointment.* We are ſtrangers to thoſe miſeries they undergo in paſſion, but let us not be ſo in compaſſion; let us think we ſee the Calamities of War with their eyes, and feel them through their ſides, and let not the *Afflictions of poor Joſeph* be forgotten. And let us never forget how much we are beholding to thoſe, who are the Inſtruments of our Peace, and contribute ſo much to the continuance of our quiet. 1. Next under God; to our Gracious King, who is every minute expoſing himſelf, and ready to ſacrifice his Life for our ſafety. And next under him, to You our Valiant Countrey-men, who ſtand as it were in the Gap between us and Ruin; may we never grudge you our Purſes or our Prayers. None I know, except ſuch as are Traytors to their Countrey, as well as to the Government, (and to our ſhame be it ſpoken, ſome ſuch we have among us) none but they will, I am ſure, deny you the later, that is, their Prayers; and indeed there's every whit as much reaſon cheerfully to part with the former. The preſent Taxes (though perhaps heavy) are yet as neceſſary, as a Levy to keep up the Sea-banks, which otherwiſe would drown and overwhelm all: They are to preſerve us from the Incroachments of an inveterate Enemy, whoſe very Mercies are Cruel. And they who by denying the Tax, or any other way, weaken the Defence of their Countrey, may well be lookt upon as Men bereav'd of all notion of good, and ſenſe of Heaven. Nor can they have any thing to ſay for themſelves. For whatever the Government or Governors may be, tho they were ſuch as they would falſly repreſent them, yet it alters not the Caſe. Treaſon againſt the State, and a Mans own

Amos 6. 4, 5.

Land,

Land, hath by *Jews*, *Turks* and *Pagans* been ever look'd on as horrid and abominable. And they that any other way contribute towards this, do ſhare in the ſame guilt: ſuch as embezel the Publick Stores, or Snip the Publick Money, eſpecially if they with-hold the Soldiers or the Seamens Dues, which is the price of their blood, do really rob every particular Perſon in the Nation, who is Intereſt'd therein, and whoſe ſafety depends thereupon; and ſuch Cheats (I can call them no better) are more to be abhorr'd, more ſeverely puniſh'd, than Robbers on the High-way.

Again, To be falſe or perfidious in any Publick Office or Truſt in ſuch a juncture as this, is not only to betray the Intereſt of theſe Three Nations, but of all thoſe that are joyn'd in Alliance with us, and indeed an injury to all Chriſtendom; as tending to promote the the Univerſal Empire of *France*, which muſt be attended with the Univerſal Ruine of other Nations. A guilt not to be expreſt, and 'twere ſtrange, if any, either honeſt or wiſe Man ſhould be involv'd in it. For it's ſuch a guilt as carries with it its own Puniſhment; and their Wooden Shoes (as one hath told them) will reproach their blockiſh heads, and their extream folly will not fail to be its own pennance. So that we muſt either be true to the Intereſt of our Country, or ſuffer in its ruine.

And therefore as we would not ſee the Land of our Nativity inſlav'd to a Forreign Power: As we would not have our Religion truckle to Popery, and our Liberty to Slavery. As we would not behold our Enemies poſſeſſing all that's dear to us; and above all, as we would not ſee the *Abomination* of *Deſolation* ſet up in our Churches, and that Religion, which our Martyrs ſeal'd with their deareſt Blood, eclips'd, if not extinguiſh'd. I ſay, as we would not ſhare in theſe intollerable Grievances, and longer injoy thoſe inеſtimable Priviledges both Spiritual and Temporal, wherewith we are now (above any other People) ſufficiently bleſt: We muſt do two things; 1. We muſt all in our Stations endeavour a through Reformation, and for our Countries ſake, do all that in us lies, to diſcourage and root out that Atheiſm, Profaneſs, and Debauchery, that hath overſpread its Borders. Then ſhall we 2*ly*. Be fitted for all thoſe Services God is calling us to. This will whet and enliven our Courage, which together with the juſtneſs of our Cauſe, will make us bold and undaunted when we engage our Enemies. This will ſecure us that God *Himſelf is for us, and* then *who can be againſt us?* For as Vice and Impiety do expoſe a People and Nation to Miſery and Ruine; ſo vertuous and good Courſes, when Men are careful to pleaſe God, when they are juſt, ſober, chaſt, merciful, and diligent obſervers of God's Laws and

their

their own: They may surely expect to live in a more flourishing and happy State, than a Nation where Sin and all manner of wickedness doth abound.

True Vertue and Piety will raise the Spirits, and secure the Hearts of Men. A good conscience (which is utterly inconsistent with a lewd debauch'd life) makes a Man as bold as a Lyon, and resolute to do his duty let what will happen. Whereas the Prophet speaketh of the wicked, *The sinners in Sion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites.* Isa. 33. 14. Men that are false to God, and really of no Religion or Conscience, but what serves their present ends, are at all times full of distrusts and fears, not knowing what may happen. But Men that are truly Religious and Brave, are Bodily and true to themselves, and cannot start from what they are justly called to. And let us all Glorify the Name of the Lord, discharge our Consciences in a due performance of our Duties, which the defence of our Religion, and the Laws and Liberty of our Country may justly expect from us. And to the best expedient in order to it, cast away your sins, get your hearts clean and clean hands, that the Spirit of the Lord may come mightily upon you, as he did upon the famous Worthies of Old, who being thus supported always did wonders.

We little know how soon any, or all of us may be called to pass through the waters of Tribulation; and therefore let the Bread of God be our Meat, the Substance of our Prayers. That he, who fed Noah and his Family in the Ark, from perishing by the Waters, and led the Children of *Israel* through the *Red Sea*, would be graciously pleased to vouchsafe us his Divine Presence, and succour us in our greatest Dangers, and glorifie himself in our Deliverance.

And as for you who go down into the deep in a literal sense, (since for the love you bear unto it, through the great Waters) and therefore cannot but be dangerous, to distinguish that the *Psalmist* could not conclude whether he should reckon those who go to Sea among the living or the dead, but God be thanked, Christians know better, and therefore recommend themselves into the hands of God, and by Faith and Prayer Engage the Divine Power as the best and safest Convoy. For he alone it is, that can rebuke the Storm and Fury of the Sea. He who is universally present in all places, is powerfully present in the Waters. *They that go down to the Sea in Ships,* saith the Psalmist, *see the works of the Lord, and his Wonders in the deep.* And therefore may be Reasoned Perswasions shall attend you, that where you leave your Country and Friends, you may return again in Peace and Safety, and with the same full Content and Satisfaction after Miracles of Deliverance in a long Voyage kiss your Native Shore. That you at last, after all your Perils here endured, enter into your Masters Joy, which shall be the Joy of all Joys.

Psal. 107. 23, 24.

To the which Glory God of his great Mercy bring us all. To whom with the Father and Holy Spirit be Glory, Honour and Praise, from this World and for ever. Amen.

FINIS.